1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13
Sinkiang AI1

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIETY

I. General Introduction

The Northwest of China, consisting of the four provinces: Shensi, Kansu, Chinghai, and Sinkiang, part of which is now called the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region, comprises an area of 1.3 million square miles, (almost a third of all China), in which thirty-six million people live. There are at least four different racial types (Turanides, Sinides, Mongoloides and Tangutides) and more than a dozen different ethnic groups: Eastern Turks or New Uighur (Chin. Wei-wu-erh), Chinese (chin. Han), Chinese Muslims (chin. Han-hui or Tung-kan-hui, Engl. Dungans), Kazakhs (chin. Ha-sa-k'o), Kirghiz (chin. Chi-erh-chi-ssu) Uzbeks (chin. Wu-tzu-pieh-k'o), Tatars (chin. T'a-t'a-erh), Tajiks (chin. T'a-chi-k'o), Western Mongols or Oirats (chin. Ölöt or simply Meng-ku), Sarigh-Uighurs (chin. Tung-hsiang-hui-hui), Shera Yögur (chin. Tu-jen), Monguors (chin. also Tu-jen), Salars (chin. Sa-la), Tibetans (chin. Hsi-fan), Manchu (chin. Man), Sibo (chin. Hsi-po) and Solons (chin. So-lun). The last three ethnic groups, the Manchus, Sibos, and Solons are persistently listed in Communist censuses, although it has been proved that they are non-existent as linguistic units, or as separate ethnic groups. Numerically, the Chinese constitute the overwhelming majority in the Northwest (about thirty million).

While the Turks of the Northwest (i.e. New Uighurs, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Tatars and Salars) are rather firm believers in Islam (Mohammedanism), the Western Mongols, Sarigh-Uighurs (the latter are Turks), Shera Yögur, and Tibetans are faithful Buddhists of the northern form, also called Lama Buddhism, and the Chinese believe in a variety of religious or philosophical systems: Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and even Demonism and Animism.

The economic pattern of the Northwest as well displays an enormous variety; we find nomadic pastoralism among the Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Western Mongols, and Tibetans, intensive horticulture among the New Uighur of the oasis-belt of Sinkiang, agriculture by means of irrigation (kariz system. See chapter about agriculture) among Chinese (only fifteen percent of the Northwest agriculture is without any irrigation), sedentary Turks and Mongols, and a mixture of primitive agriculture and pastoralism among some Tibetan and Mongolian Tribes of Chinghai and Kansu. The Turkic and the Chinese Muslims are the bearers of the trade along the old "silk roads" of Sinkiang, Chinghai and Kansu. The urban centers of the Northwest are also centers of petty industry and handicraft. The newest